

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No. 10/684,464
Atty. Docket No. Q74306

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 8-14, 18-21 and 25-34 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 33 and 34 have been newly added herewith.

Examiner Interview

Applicant's representative conducted a personal interview with the Examiner on February 28, 2007 and thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended at that time. During the interview, the differences between the present application and Lovatt were discussed as well as the language of claim 1.

Particularly, the Examiner acknowledged that Lovatt includes an opening 50 which is not closed with a plug. In contrast, the non-limiting embodiment of Fig. 1 shows a plug 52 which closes an opening below an end of the cover 16.

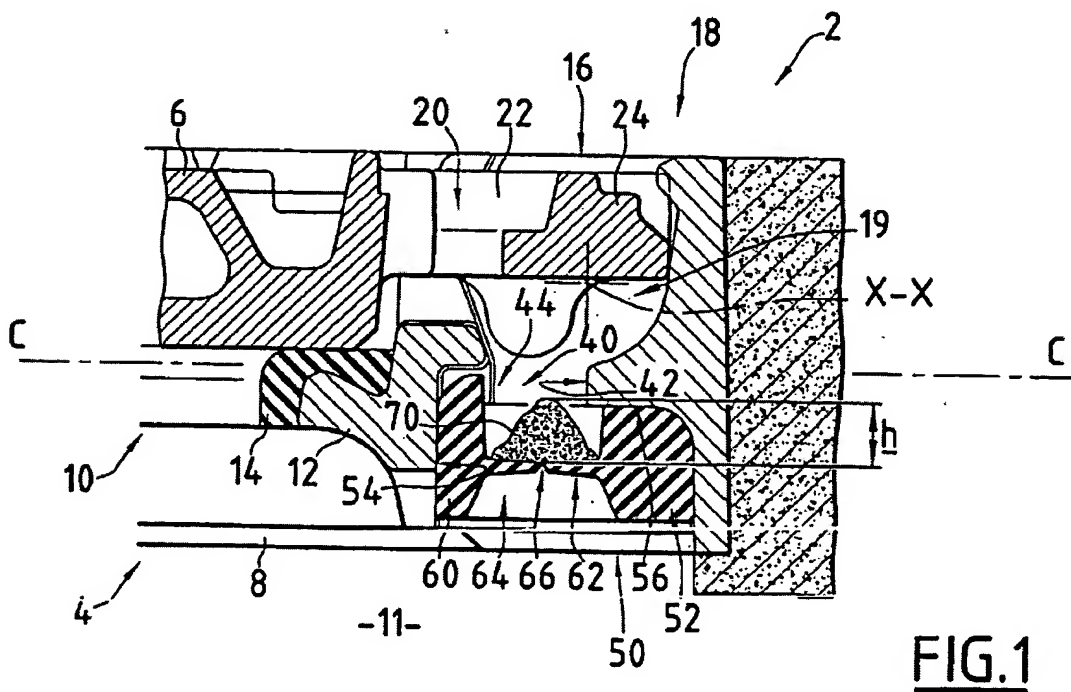
Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 3, 6, 9, 12, 19 and 27-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,012,885 to Lovatt.

Claims 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21, 25, 26 and 32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lovatt.

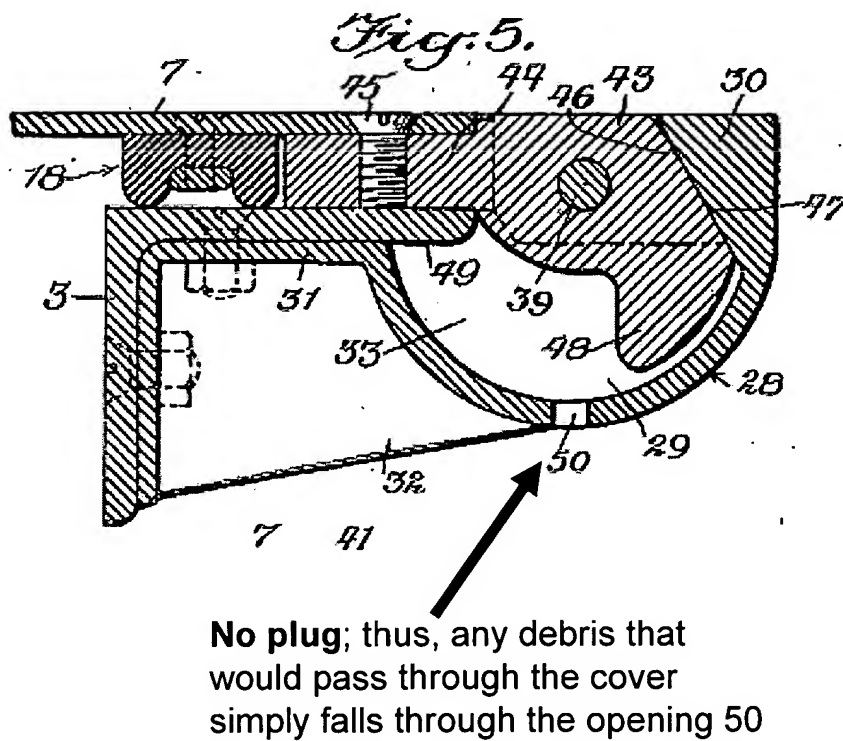
Claim 1 recites an inner recess with an opening. Claim 1 further recites that there is an inserted plug in the inner recess which closes the opening and that the plug is located below the cover hinge knuckle.

For example, the non-limiting embodiment of Fig. 1 of the present application teaches an inner recess 50 with an inserted plug 52. The plug 52 is located below the hinge knuckle 20 of the cover 6 at the hinge portion 16 and closes an opening of the recess 50. Thus, as shown in the non-limiting embodiment of Fig. 1 (reproduced below), the plug stops dirt or other foreign matter 70 that falls below the cover hinge knuckle 20 from passing through the opening of the inner recess.



In contrast, Lovatt lacks a plug as claimed. Below the end of the cover in Lovatt there is an opening 50 without a plug. Thus, any debris or foreign matter which would fall through the

cover (including the end of the cover 43, 48), merely falls through the opening 50 (*see* Lovatt Fig. 1, reproduced below). Lovatt specifically teaches that if any water enters past the cover it will flow out this vent opening 50 (*see* page 2, second column, lines 47-50). Thus, Lovatt clearly lacks a plug as claimed, and claim 1 is allowable over Lovatt.



Independent claims 27 and 30 are allowable at least for reasons similar to claim 1. The remaining claims depend from one of independent claims 1, 27 and 30, and are allowable at least by virtue of their respective dependencies. Applicant also notes that these dependent claims include additional features which further distinguish them from Lovatt. For example, claims 2

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recites that the plug is made from an elastically deformable material and claim 32 recites that the plug is an elastomer.

New Claims

Claims 33 and 34 have been newly added herewith. Claim 33 depends from claim 1 and claim 34 depends from claim 30. Accordingly, claims 33 and 34 are allowable at least by virtue of their respective dependencies. Claims 33 and 34 are supported at least by Fig. 1.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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Date: March 6, 2007